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[487] Among the economic determinants that make the mountain depend on the plain, let us mention in the very first place salt (2).

2. The salt route is as important for the montagnards as, on an entirely different scale, that of spices was for the medieval Occident: at bottom a question of cuisine!

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[263] In nourishment based on flat cakes and porridge, the importance of condiments is considerable. It is not exaggerating to see in this, much more than in the cereals, the most imperious servitude of the montagnard with regard to the outside. By food, in fact, the whole balance of family life is affected: potent motive, although originating from obscure causes toward which observation is too rarely inclined. The Seksawa mountain is destitute of salt.

[443] Even today it is seen in huge /102/ whitish or pink piles at the souq /sook/ of Imintanout. It comes from the Idaw Isaren in H'sh'a, and from the far-away lagoons of the Inzzūyma, called by us "Lac Zima." Two qualities, one of which, very bitter to the taste, is naturally preferred by the montagnards for their animals and themselves. If therefore, classical method in the old Moroccan chronicles, the power of the plain blockades the Seksawa, or hems them in at the border markets, it is the salt route that it cuts for them, even more harshly than that of barley (1).

1. An example, dating from the beginning of the eighteenth century, in Justinard, La Rihla du Marabout de Tasaft /The Rihla of the Marabout of Tasaft/, 1940, pp. 37 sq.

243 In fact, the high valleys devote to cereal cultivation a portion that astonishes us, because it involves what would appear, in a strict economy, as a waste of land and water, and especially of labor. But they gain from it what we might call a flywheel /Fr. volant/ of security. Cereal cultivation with great expense, with great feelings: one will see all that such feelings can have to be

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coexist. It is a "maison en hauteur" /high house/ (3).

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3. This is the expression of A. Demangeon, in his suggestive article on "L'habitation rurale en France /The rural habitation in France/, " Ann. de G ographie, 1920, pp. 370 sq. A comparison is made with an architecture common all around the Mediterranean: our Pyrenean and Alpine south, the western part of the Balkans, etc. A frequent feature there is the second-floor veranda, which we find here in the form of a sort of loggia: the assqqif.

the base of which is occupied by a shady and oblong stable: the agrar, plur. i^wgrar, source of heat and laboratory of manure.

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This manure, amazir, carefully gathered, then spread on the minuscule squares of irrigation, renews a soil worn out by maldroit immersions and a production always kept going. By that, the Seksawa peasantry joins the oldest agricultural classicism of the Mediterranean. It is based on a give and take between man, soil, and animal. It thus contrasts in quasi-absolute fashion with the plains agriculture in Morocco, where this liaison between herd and tillage disappeared sometime at an epoch otherwise uncertain, never to reappear any more up to now.

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/111/ The stabling, propitious for the preservation of the young subjects, implies coherent care of the pastures: natural and even artificial. In the fields, at weeding time, for example, but also on the slopes surrounding the village, or in the forest, one sees the women gathering, basket in hand or an armful on the back. It is the men who cut and chop the young leaves of the holm oak or of the juniper tree for their beasts; a resource for winter. A whole range of plants is thus collected, and of such a type that a continuity manifests itself between the foods of man and those of the livestock. The difference between "salads" and provender is not great, and the solidarity between them, as soon as there is trouble or scarcity, is transformed into identity. Thus

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231 the acorn of the holm oak, abuhu, the berry of the juniper,
 222 abelhas, dear to the goats, and whose dessication and grinding
 262 give man a substitute flour. Normally, the dried turnips,
akhchawn, which play such a great role in the montagnard econ-
 omy, are common to man and animal. The beast is not only
 the neighbor, but the messmate of the village citizen. On the
 246 other hand, this society is familiar with what we call artificial
 fodders. Very rarely still lucerne, which, however, the Sous
 practices (1).

1. But this lucerne, lfess, did it not formerly
 serve as human food? Cf. the curious observa-
 tions of J. Mathieu, "Étude des conditions de
 vie dans une palmeraie du Moyen Ghéris et
 contrôle de la nutrition de ses habitants /Study
 of the conditions of life in a palm grove of the
 Middle Ghéris and verification of the nutrition
 of its inhabitants/," Bulletin de l'Institut
d'Hygiène du Maroc, I-II, 1939, p. 31.

What one finds here is the fleshy grass (poa bulbosa), maintained
 in the "damp meadow," az'mu. The mowing of the az'mu inter-
 venes after maturity and deposit of the grains on the spot. One
 gathers there a Gramineae, called tâg^wlast, a name that approxi-
 mates that of barley cut green for animal fodder (âg^wlas). These
 prairies are prepared in the shade of olive trees, and especially
 of walnut trees, in all the upper Seksawa: a./Mh'nd, Fensu,
 Wanz'id', Iguntar, Agersili, Tabgurt. The fodder is kept in a
 [343] storehouse until the time of tillage, when it serves to strengthen
 the animals.

246 Finally the mountain pasturages give rise to a wise organiza-
 675 tion of "défens" /prohibition against cutting/. The ban

/113 cont./

221 In one case, it is even the family as a whole that executes a sea-
233 sonal displacement. It is a matter of a part of the Idma. Spe-
241 cifically, of the one from the oldest village, Usikis. Once the
[634] harvesting of the /114/ ground of Agersili is done, the people go

as a family to summer in two villages of "bordes" /small farms/
or "burons" /shepherds' huts/, as our Pyrèneans say, Twurirt and
Agadir n-Tsila. Huts of dry stone are massed on the side of the

[361] mountain, on the right bank of the depression. They affect the
[346] form of villages, which appear in ruins to us, but which are in-
221 deed lively and each has its timezgida. A life of milk products

and the consumption of young barley then starts, profoundly
[262] marking this period of the year. It is the only case where this

form of summering in the mountains is fully observable. On the
neighboring pastures of Amerdul, the people of Tasa (a. H'ad-
duyws) make only an incomplete application of it: only the
shepherds and the women come. An ethnological study pushed
further would undoubtedly end on the summering of Asikis /sic/.

on one hand, and the functional specialization which restricts
that of Tasa, on the other hand, with revealing images of the
pastoral spirit of these people: a general atmosphere of merry-
making, of a concentrated and reconciled social life. The con-

[273] sumption of the young ears and the abuse of the whey provoke a
[832] sort of drunkenness, which occasionally has toxic and, for cer-
tain, sexual effects. It is the period called talddrar or tamakhirt.

[574] The greatest manifestation of this general gaiety is the feast of
the Tichka, officially reorganized some fifteen years ago, but
according to an old intertribal tradition.

233 The movement of the Seksawa livestock is not summed up by
221 these summer displacements to the mountain pastures. A rhythm
648 of greater amplitude, and which could more accurately be called
transhumance than what precedes, animates the high-mountain
herds. Under the doubtlessly reduced aspect that the evolutions
of the livestock in Seksawa know at present, they nonetheless
constitute, on the scale of the present life of this society, a con-
siderable movement. After having followed, from S. to N., the
bed of the river, the stream diverges in two main directions. A

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4. Idma:

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[63] The a. Ilarzg of Usikis have the initium for putting water in the ditches. The Iseqqalen abstain from all enterprises on Monday: one time when they intended to climb to Agersili on this day some of their girls died. The a. Ikru of Ad'erd'ur and of Wanchkir open the tillage. Here is why. For six years the Idma had remained without rain; others say seven years. The ikhs-s took turns watching for clouds on the horizon. When it was the turn of the a. Ikru, rain fell, to the general delight. Whence the present practice. The ikhs-s that open the tillage in the other villages are: for Usikis, the a. Ilarzg; for Taselli, the a. Lh'sen.

5. In Imt'ddan, the a. Uchikar open the tillage and put water in the ditches. The ait Ubaqa slaughter the cow of Lalla Aziza.

6. In ait Mh'nd, the a. Bakhkha open the tillage.

7. In ait Musa, no qualification of this sort.

8. Air Lh'sen:

[782] Wanz'id'. Tillage: a. H'sayn; irrigations: sacrifice to sidi Lw'li on the first Friday in March; harvest: a. Mulid; war: a. Berka.

Buteghradin. Tillage: 1. a. Mess'ud (Sunday); irrigations ditto; harvest: ditto.

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[613] On the morning of the yenneyr, battle between ikhs-s by blows with clusters of nettles.

Agadir. Tillage: a. Naqr (Sunday); harvest (ditto); irrigation: a. Hammo; jumps into the fire the night of amāchur.

[541] Battle by blows with clusters of nettles.

Awinas. Tillage: a. Amar; harvest ditto; irrigation, a.

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[613] Umāli. Aspersions between ikhs-s on the morning of amāchur; dinner of porridge the night of the innair.

Ighilen. Tillage: a. Mess'ud (Sunday); harvest: ditto; irrigation: a. Lechger. Same custom as above.

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[541] Tabratjut. Tillage: a. Menqr (Sunday); harvest ditto; irrigation: a. Ufqir Lh'sen. Custom of aspersions on the morning of the amāchur and of the porridge the night of the Yenneyr; battle by blows with clumps of grass.

234/166 cont./ Milk is never
[262] consumed directly; a prejudice, maintained by the women, is op-
posed to it, with the avowed goal of turning it all into butter.
The preservation of this commodity, subjected to salting and
melting, is indefinite; it is passed off as improving with age, just
like wine. Certainly our pastoral societies extend these resources
by a substantial gamut of cheeses, which is not known here. A
serious gap; it is hardly the case, in the course of the high pastur-
age, that the shepherds make more or less clandestinely, by add-
ing to the milk the juice of the fig or that of certain plants, what
they call tak^wmmart (1).

[171] 1. This is the same name that the Ahaggar
dialect gives it. The Touareg /Tuareg/
know and utilize the hardened cheese, capa-
ble of being carried and pounded.

232 The procedure is retarded, not only in relation to ours, of course,
233 but even in relation to those of the Arab transhumants of North
[171] Africa or of the Touareg /Tuareg/. Besides, although it is not
ignorant of a barbarous method of castration, native technique in-
curs criticism by its blind confidence in biological increase, sub-
ject to such terrible hazards. The goat, the sheep, and, to a
much lesser degree, the bovine have assumed a monetary value,
symbolic in a way, and their multiplication is not regulated ac-
cording to either the possibilities of pasturage or the climatic
[171] incertitude. Another general trait in the Maghreb.

These are serious weaknesses. But the coherence and the care
outweigh this for the breeder, both in relation to the other divisions
of his economy and in relation to the breeders of the plain.

245 Opposite to this, the precariousness of the tree.

Almond trees, olive trees, and walnut trees prosper or perish
without the work that would be suitable for them. Naturally, they
participate, like all other crops, in the preoccupation with water.
One notices, for example, the almond trees having fallen to a
zone higher than the irrigated, the care with which they are often
placed against a supporting wall of dry stones in order to gather in

[Ibuban]

/208 cont./

241 | turnip crop. But, in general, nothing to anticipate other than the chances and risks of dry agriculture. Paradoxically, this peasant is put in the situation of his colleague of the plains or piedmont plateaus. But he does not have at his disposal, as he does, the compensatory resource of space. Consequently he has applied himself to remedy these misfortunes, with a care deserving a better fate: vast staircase of tiers as at Amassin, painstaking clearing as at Iggayzen, meticulous treatment of the soil on declivities, planes, furrows and beds, in order to collect the least bit of moisture, large plantings of opuntia, the fruit of which is dried and stored, planting of almond trees above all, more than 35,000 for some 300 inhabitants.

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And this puts one on the track of an explanation. Not being able to be rendered by a display of lands for sowing, this recourse to the extensive, if one may say it, is expressed by the multiplication of the tree on open soil. Yet, in fact, not the least trace of an orchard technique is to be sought there: neither grooves draining the impluvium, nor "basin," tanut, nor, naturally, pruning, grafting, or selection. The planting visibly surpasses the maintenance faculties. The almond tree has been conceived in association with the forest, like the carob tree, and is inserted among oaks or lentisks. Another characteristic: these immense plaques of opuntia, which arise for certain -- the alignment by tiers below Amassin is one proof of it -- from a general taste rather than from the spontaneous dispersion of which local folklore makes the crow the agent. In the middle of August, and when the leaves of the aknari /209/ itself shrivel and curl up because of a lack of water, there will be a joyful debauch -- and the main nourishment of the day -- in going to gulp down these sweet fruits, difficult to approach, but occupying the stomach nicely. At this time of the year, the hawkers sell an incredible number of knives designed to peel the prickly skin. The gaiety is expressed by a recrudescence of marriages. Divorces, it is true, will follow as soon as the year gives signs of inclemency.

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The almond remains the principal wealth. But barley sometimes gives surprising results. According to a proverb of the